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THE CONSULTATION SCENE OF *L'AMOUR MÉDECIN*

L'Amour Médecin, according to Molière himself, is "un simple crayon, un petit impromptu, dont le Roi a voulu se faire un divertissement." It was "proposé, fait, appris et représenté en cinq jours" (September, 1665). The comic elements of the little sketch are furnished chiefly by four doctors who, summoned by Sganarelle for a consultation on the case of his sick daughter, spend their time in irrelevant conversation (II, 3); in a dispute as to the nature of the patient's malady and the proper remedies to be prescribed (II, 4, 5); in a reconciliation (III, 1, 2) at the suggestion of a fifth doctor, who urges his colleagues to cease their disputes in order to deceive their clients more effectively. While this is going on, the patient is supposed to be lying at the point of death.

The study devoted to this little play in the Grands Écrivains edition of Molière's works presents most of the contemporary illustrative material which is available, and arrives at the conclusion that *L'Amour Médecin* is not based upon any special contemporary event.¹ It is the purpose of this paper to review the old and to present some new evidence in an effort to establish, or at least render more probable, the contrary point of view.

In the consultation scenes (II, 3-5) which form the kernel of the piece, M. Tomès, after some turmoil, delivers his opinion first: "Monsieur, nous avons raisonné sur la maladie de votre fille, et mon avis, à moi, est que cela procède d'une grande chaleur du sang: ainsi je conclus à la saigner le plus tôt que vous pourrez." M. des Fonandrès then makes his pronouncement: "Et moi, je dis que sa maladie est une pourriture d'humeurs, causée par une trop grande réplétion; ainsi je conclus à lui donner de l'émétique." These two worthies enter upon a violent discussion as to the proper remedy and finally leave the room. In the following scene (II, 4) M. Macroton and the subservient M. Bahys in perfect harmony give their diagnosis and outline a method of treatment. They agree that the patient's symptoms are: "indicatifs d'une vapeur fuligineuse

¹ *Œuvres de Molière* (Paris, 1873), V, 275.

et mordicante qui lui picote les membranes du cerveau"; that "cette vapeur que nous nommons en grec *atmos* est causée par des humeurs putrides et conglutineuses qui sont contenues dans le bas ventre." After outlining a formidable program of cathartics, M. Macroton and his satellite, M. Bahys, admit that the girl may die, but point out to the distracted father that he will, at least, have the satisfaction of knowing that she has died "dans les formes." According to a note found among the manuscripts of Brossette, Boileau furnished Molière with the names, derived from Greek, of the four doctors who figure in these scenes: Des Fonandrès (mankiller) designated Beda des Fougerais; Macroton (long or great tone) was Guénaut; Tomès (bloodletter) signified d'Aquin; and Bahys (barker or yelper, "aboyeur") designated Esprit.

A scene, similar to the one portrayed by Molière, was enacted in 1661 by four doctors who sat in consultation during a crisis in the last sickness of the cardinal Mazarin. This is the description of it as given by Gui Patin:

Ce matin le Mazarin a reçu l'extrême-onction et de là est tombé dans une grande faiblesse. . . . Hier à deux heures . . . quatre de ses médecins, savoir: Guénaut, Valot, Brayer et Beda des Fougerais, *alterquoient* ensemble et ne s'accordoient de l'espèce de la maladie dont le malade mourait; Brayer dit que la rate est gâtée; Guénaut dit que c'est le foie; Valot dit que c'est le poumon et qu'il y a de l'eau dans la poitrine; des Fougerais dit que c'est un abcès du mésentère, et qu'il a vidé du pus, qu'il en a vu dans les selles, et en ce cas-là il a vu ce que pas un des autres n'a vu. Ne voilà pas d'habiles gens. Ce sont les fourberies ordinaires des empiriques et des médecins de cour, qu'on fait suppléer à l'ignorance.¹

The situation is the same, and two of the doctors, Guénaut and des Fougerais, are by common consent identical in both cases.

In his *Les Médecins au Temps de Molière*,² Maurice Raynaud attempted to identify the other two also, Vallot and Brayer with Tomès and Bahys. According to him, d'Aquin "était grand donneur d'antimoine, par conséquent grand ennemi de la saignée. . . . Il est plus probable qu'il s'agit de Vallot, alors premier médecin du Roi, et qui saignait en effet beaucoup, à commencer par son maître." In opposing the conclusion of Raynaud, the editors of Molière present

¹ *Lettres de Gui Patin* (Paris, 1843), III, 338 f.

² Paris, 1862, pp. 135 f.

in the first place a very doubtful argument: "Il est vrai que lorsqu'il [d'Aquin] eut succédé à Vallot (1671), il se garda de pratiquer, comme lui (Vallot) des saignées sur le Roi, qu'il savait en être effrayé: d'Aquin était avant tout courtisan."¹ They also cite in support of their argument Gui Patin, according to whom Vallot opposed bleeding the king in 1658, but they neglect to add the fact cited by them later (p. 327, n. 2), that Patin here is in contradiction with the *Journal de la Santé du Roi*.² They are greatly influenced, if not absolutely determined, by the consideration that Molière would naturally have hesitated to present in his comedy, "le premier médecin du Roi," because "Le Roi . . . pouvait trouver bon qu'on le fit rire aux dépens des premiers médecins de sa famille, très mauvais qu'on se moquât du sien, à qui une vie si auguste était particulièrement confiée" (*ibid.*, p. 273). This consideration has weight; it may well have caused the transference of the identification of Tomès from Vallot to d'Aquin by writers like Brossette and Cizeron Rival,³ who, writing many years later, could hardly have known all the circumstances.

Neither Raynaud nor the editors of Molière make any effort to establish just what was the standing of Vallot at court at the time when *L'Amour Médecin* was produced. In a letter of 1655, Gui Patin writes: "La reine a refusé à Valot la permission de faire venir des médecins pour traiter avec lui le roi et pour consulter pour lui à Fontainebleau. . . . On tient Valot en grand danger d'être chassé . . . au moins en est-il en danger si le cardinal ne le remet aux bonnes grâces du roi et de la reine avec lesquels il est fort mal."⁴ Later in the same letter he asserts: "J'ai appris que Valot est fort mal en cour, que la reine l'a rudement traité et presque chassé; que le roi l'a menacé, et qu'il ne tient plus qu'à un filet" (II, 211). A week later he announces: "Aujourd'hui le Mazarin défend Valot et

¹ *Op. cit.*, V, 272.

² They also allege the fact that a bloodletting administered by d'Aquin was said to have hastened the death of Marie Thérèse. But, as this event did not occur till 1683, it could not have had any influence upon Molière or Boileau; it may, however, have influenced the identification of Brossette.

³ Cizeron Rival enlarged upon the notes of Brossette in his *Récréations littéraires* (Paris, 1765), and is generally cited in this connection.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, II, 209.

tâche de le remettre aux bonnes grâces du roi et de la reine, en disant qu'il n'a rien fait que par son ordre" (II, 214). A year later we read: "Valot avoit encouru la disgrâce générale de toute la cour, et même du roi et de la reine; mais le Mazarin l'a maintenu par raison d'Etat et la sienne particulière" (III, 65). A letter of the following year notes with evident relish that Vallot is being called Gargantua: "depuis qu'il tua Gargant, intendant des finances" (III, 77). He is said to have come near losing even the favor of the cardinal (II, 360), but seems to have soon effected a reconciliation, for in a letter of 1658 Gui Patin reiterates: "Le roi d'une part et la reine de l'autre, vouloient faire chasser Valot, et l'eussent fait, mais Mazarin l'a maintenu" (III, 90). A letter of 1659 must reflect at least something of contemporary opinion: "Nous avons à la cour deux médecins fort superbes. Valot est le premier, qui fait tout ce qu'il peut pour attrapper de l'argent et se remplumer de *la grosse somme qu'il a donnée* pour être premier médecin" (III, 153).¹ In 1660 we read: "La reine-mère est fort dépitée contre Valot; on a parlé de lui ôter sa charge, et de le réduire à une pension viagère, en donnant sa place à un autre" (III, 247). A short time afterward: "Valot n'est pas bien en cour. S'il perd une fois son patron il est mal en ses affaires, et sera renvoyé comme ignorant" (III, 257). A letter of November of the same year contains in the way of gossip this item: "Le roi s'est dépité contre Valot, et au lieu de prendre sa médecine l'a jetée par terre" (III, 289). In September of the following year it is said: "Valot est malade de fièvre, rhumatisme et érysipèle. On dit aussi que c'est de regret de ce que le roi lui a reproché qu'il étoit espion et pensionnaire du sieur Fouquet" (III, 390). Finally on August 18, 1665, less than a month before the representation of *L'Amour Médecin*, the king is said to have manifested his displeasure against Valot for something the latter had said against the physician of the queen-mother (III, 549). Granting that the statements of Gui Patin must often be considerably discounted, it seems nevertheless evident that the king could have felt no great displeasure in seeing this physician held up to ridicule, even though he was occupying the charge of "premier médecin du roi."

¹ The italicized phrase may well have some relation to the continued retention of Vallot at court.

The editors of Molière come to this conclusion finally: "D'Aquin et Vallot aimaient, l'un comme l'autre, la saignée; dès lors reste-t-il une bonne raison de substituer au nom de celui-là le nom de celui-ci?" (V, 273). There is a good reason, and it consists in the record of bloodlettings attributed to Vallot by Gui Patin, who has very little to say in this regard concerning d'Aquin. To begin with, here is a very significant item from a letter of 1657:

La Duchesse de Lorraine a pris deux fois d'une certaine drogue stibiale, que le charlatan appelloit de l'or potable; et d'autant qu'elle empira fort, le sieur Valot la fit rudement saigner, *inter stibium et lethum*: d'où vient la grosse querelle qui est aujourd'hui entre lui et le petit Vignon . . . qui a dit tout haut que Valot l'avoit tué (*sic*) de l'avoir tant fait saigner; sur quoi j'apprends qu'il court un papier latin imprimé contre le dit Valot [I, 222].

The station of the unfortunate patient and the publicity given to the event were in themselves enough to have fastened upon the physician the reputation of being a bloodletting zealot. During the illness of Mazarin (1660) the statement is made that "Le cardinal Mazarin a été saigné (ce dimanche 1^{er} août) en tout sept fois" (III, 245).¹ A little later in the course of the same illness it is announced that the cardinal "a été déjà saigné cinq fois. Valot est bien empêché" (III, 257). Six months later he writes: "Le cardinal a fait de grands reproches à Valot de ne l'avoir pu guérir et d'être cause de sa mort; l'autre, pour paroître fâché de tels reproches, s'est mis au lit et s'est fait saigner trois fois" (III, 337). Finally in announcing a sickness of Vallot himself (1662) Gui Patin announces that, as a preliminary treatment, "Il (Vallot) a été saigné plusieurs fois" (III, 410). These details of resemblance and of circumstance should have at least as much weight as the identification made by Brossette more than thirty years after the event.

The other identification which must be established if possible is that of M. Bahys. In the manuscript notes of Brossette the name of Esprit ("premier médecin de Monsieur") is bracketed after the name Bahis, or Bahys. Cizeron Rival, editor of the correspondence of Boileau and Brossette, enlarges upon this note (*op. cit.*, pp. 25 f.) and adds that Boileau "donna à M. Esprit, qui bredouillait, celui (le nom) de Bahis, qui signifie jappant, aboyant." It is apparent

¹ Inasmuch as Vallot is represented in the closest attendance on the Cardinal at this time, it must have been by his orders.

that a Greek word meaning "to yelp" or "to bark" was not a very apt designation for a man who "stammered." It was for this reason that Raynaud connected the name of M. Bahys with Brayer, the doctor who figures in the consultation on the case of Mazarin. But the editors of Molière reject this identification: "Supposer que Bahys (aboyeur) pourrait bien être Brayer (prononcer brailler) est sans doute une conjecture séduisante; mais puisqu'on nous dit qu'Esprit bredouillait l'allusion devient plus claire encore; tenons-nous-en à Esprit" (p. 274). But a few pages farther on (p. 288) these same editors admit that "La prononciation lente de M. Macroton et le bredouillement de M. Bahys seraient des indications fort claires, s'il était prouvé que Guénaut¹ et Esprit parlissent ainsi; mais nous ne sommes informés que par des commentateurs de la pièce qu'on pourrait soupçonner d'avoir avancé, pour accréditer leurs explications, ce qu'ils ne savaient pas bien." As a matter of fact, the tradition that Esprit stammered seems to rest upon no more solid foundation than the statement of Cizeron Rival, and his statement seems to have as a basis only the stage direction to the first speech of Bahys: "Celui-ci parle toujours en bredouillant." In other words it all depends upon the correctness of the identification whether we credit Brayer or Esprit with an impediment of speech.

The identification of M. Bahys with Esprit seems however to have existed from the first. The earliest notice of it appears in a letter of Gui Patin, written September 25, 1665, some ten days after the first public representation of the play: "On joue présentement à l'hôtel de Bourgogne *L'Amour Malade (Médecin)*: tout Paris y va en foule pour voir représenter les médecins de la cour, et principalement Esprit et Guénaut . . . on y ajoute des Fougerais, etc. Ainsi on se moque de ceux qui tuent le monde impunément" (III, 556). Since Gui Patin has stated incorrectly the name of the theater where the play was given and the name of the piece,² it is evident that Gui Patin did not attend the performance in question. He merely cited current gossip. Gui Patin apparently never attended the theater. In that respect he followed, according to

¹ The fact that Guénaut at this time was a very old man, over seventy, lends color to the epithet in his case.

² He confuses it with a ballet of Benserade and Lully given in 1657.

Raynaud, the example of reputable physicians of his time: "Un médecin, comme un magistrat, se serait fait montrer au doigt et se fût perdu dans l'opinion s'il eût paru au théâtre" (p. 409). This statement is quite in harmony with the attitude toward worldly and social amusements assumed by the doctors whom Molière represents. It is suggested also by the query of Pascal: "Qui pourrait avoir confiance dans un médecin qui ne porte pas de rabat?" And in the seventh *Épître* of Boileau, where the satirist passes in review the different types who go to see themselves represented on the stage by Molière, the doctors are conspicuously absent from the list. The editors of Molière, while citing Gui Patin's testimony, admit: "Il est incontestable que Gui Patin ne parlait que par ouï-dire; il n'est donc pas étonnant que, dans les bruits qu'il avait recueillis, il y en eût de faux" (p. 268). It was quite natural that the general public, through which Gui Patin's information came, when it saw Guénaut, Vallot—both court doctors—and des Fougerais, who was often called there for consultation, should have jumped at the conclusion that they must have all been court doctors and so have seen in M. Bahys, Esprit, "premier médecin de Monsieur." And so the report came to Gui Patin who, in turn, became the source of Brossette's identification, for Brossette cites a parallel passage from one of Gui Patin's letters in this very connection.¹ There is then no serious obstacle in the way of an identification of Bahys with Brayer, whose name offers such a close analogy to that of the doctor in the comedy.

Molière insisted that the writer of comedy must make "ses portraits ressemblants." And that leads us to a positive and quite convincing argument in favor of the identification of Bahys with Brayer. In the fifth scene of the second act, the diagnosis is taken up and carried on by Macroton and Bahys in a manner which contrasts sharply with the violence of the preceding scene between des Fonandrès and Tomès. Each utterance of M. Bahys merely echoes and stresses what Macroton has just said. For example, "Vous aurez la consolation," says Macroton (Guénaut), "qu'elle sera morte dans les formes." Whereupon M. Bahys (Brayer) chimes in: "Il

¹ *Lettres choisies de feu M. Gui Patin* (Cologne, 1691). This proves that Brossette did not pen his notes till nearly thirty years after the production of the play. His identifications therefore are not to be taken too literally.

vaut mieux mourir selon les règles, que de réchapper contre les règles." Now the names of Esprit and Guénaut are occasionally linked in the correspondence of Gui Patin, but never in a way to suggest a subserviency on the part of Esprit, a point which would lend color to the attitude of M. Bahys in this scene. In fact, a letter of August 10, 1660, dealing with this very illness of Mazarin, which we are presenting as Molière's model, relates that Esprit opposed a prescription of Vallot and Guénaut (III, 245). Three weeks later Gui Patin writes again: "Il (Vallot) a eu de grandes prises avec M. Esprit, en présence de la reine et de Guénaut" (III, 257). On the other hand, here is a passage from a letter of Gui Patin to Falconnet, written in 1663, which presents in the most vigorous terms Brayer in precisely this attitude of subserviency maintained by Bahys. Gui Patin, after stating that: "M. de Longueville est mort à Rouen, *ex duplici quidem febre tertiana, et duabus dosibus vini emetici*," goes on to say:

Notre M. Brayer (Bahys) qui y avoit été envoyé, lui en a fait prendre malgré le refus et les plaintes des trois médecins de Rouen, qui étoient d'avis contraire. Ce n'est pas qu'il ne sache fort bien que le vin émétique est un dangereux remède et un pernicieux poison; *mais il en ordonne quelquefois comme cela à cause de Guénaut (Macroton) qui est son ami, et duquel il espère d'être avancé à la cour*, bien que s'il vouloit être homme de bien il passeroit Guénaut de bien loin; mais avoir Guénaut (Macroton) pour ami par lâcheté, dire quelques mots grecs, avoir 300,000 écus de beau bien, et être le plus avaricieux du monde, cela fait venir de la pratique à Paris [III, 437].

It will be noted in the passage just cited that Gui Patin touches upon the pedantry of Guénaut and Brayer—"dire des mots grecs." Now in his first speech of the diagnosis, Macroton (Guénaut) concludes his discourse upon the necessity of proceeding cautiously with a reference to Hippocrates. Thereupon M. Bahys (Brayer) in the tone of an obsequious disciple, glosses upon what his master has just said and, as if anxious to show that he knows the reference is to the first Aphorism of Hippocrates, cites in Latin the two words upon which the Aphorism may be said to center: "*experimentum periculosum*." Had Gui Patin been as familiar with the play as he was with the frailties of his colleagues in the practice of medicine there would probably be no need of these researches to prove that the four doctors of Molière, Tomès, des Fonandrès, Macroton, and Bahys,

represented respectively the four doctors of the Mazarin consultation, Vallot, des Fougerais, Guénaut, and Brayer.

The fact that Boileau furnished the Greek names of these doctors is attested by Brossette and has never been questioned.¹ And this suggests a certain amount of collaboration. That, in turn, calls to mind those convivial gatherings held by Boileau, La Fontaine, Chapelle, Molière, and others among whom was probably numbered the poet's physician friend, Mauvillain.² At these gatherings, "On trouvait au fond des pots les idées hardies ou plaisantes; d'insolentes facéties comme le *Chapelain décoiffé* et *La Métamorphose de la perruque de Chapelain en astre*, naissaient comme d'elles-mêmes après boire."³ The consultation in question furnished all the elements for one of these "bold" or, if one likes, "insolent" manifestations of the satiric verse of this group of seventeenth-century men of letters. The names produced by Boileau furnish one bit of evidence; another is offered by an allusion in scene iii of the play, which is preparatory to the consultation scenes which follow. In this scene the doctors, instead of discussing their patient's case, spend their time in irrelevant conversaton. Tomès (Vallot) and des Fonandrès (des Fougerais) enter upon an argument as to the relative merits of the former's mule and the latter's horse. Now it seems that about the middle of the seventeenth century the mule was the conventional mount for physicians, and the adoption of the horse as a means of conveyance was looked upon as a notable innovation. In fact, according to Raynaud (pp. 79, 80), the horse became a kind of symbol distinguishing the progressives, in the practice of medicine, from the conservatives. The former, moreover, were enthusiastic adepts of antimony, while the conservatives upheld vigorously the decree of the faculty of medicine which proclaimed this remedy a poison. It is significant that in this very year of Mazarin's consultation, Boileau

¹ For another example of such collaboration see Lanson, *Boileau* (Paris, 1892), p. 20: "Un jour, avec Molière, entre Ninon et Mme de la Sablière, il fabrique le latin macaronique du *Malade Imaginaire*."

² Mauvillain is generally credited with having furnished Molière with material for his satires against the medical profession. He came from Montpellier and did not find himself at ease in Paris. "Il doit nourrir," says Raynaud, "contre Guénaut et des Fougerais un peu des méfiances que tout médecin étranger à la cour a pour ceux de ses confrères qui courent les places et les hommes" (*op. cit.*, p. 436). See in confirmation of this a letter of Gui Patin of 1662, III, 412.

³ Lanson, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

was writing the sixty-eighth verse of the sixth Satire (published in 1666): "Guénaut *sur son cheval* en passant m'éclabousse." And Guénaut was one of the most ardent prescribers of antimony according to both Gui Patin (*Lettres, passim*) and Boileau (Satire IV). But des Fougerais was a no less energetic exponent of this "drug," and according to Gui Patin, who was a staunch conservative, "tue plus de monde avec son antimoine que trois hommes de bien n'en sauvent avec les remèdes ordinaires" (II, 595). In 1661 then this matter of the mule and horse was a subject for discussion and satire, but it seems hardly probable that such a minor detail of fashion would have continued so throughout the four years which elapsed before the representation of *L'Amour Médecin*. That Boileau, who certainly had some part in the production of these scenes of Molière, should have touched upon this point at this very time is a decidedly striking coincidence.

After two bits of satire directed against the formalities observed in consultations, the father of the patient appears and insists that the doctors render a verdict. In constructing the two scenes which follow, the author, or authors, evidently had in mind the third scene of the second act of *Phormio*. In the Latin play, Demipho, involved in difficulty by his son, consults three men of law. Two of these, Hegio and Cratinus, after insisting in turn that the other speak first, deliver two opinions which are diametrically opposed. Cratinus: "It is my opinion that what this son of yours has done in your absence, in law and justice ought to be annulled." Hegio: "It doesn't appear to me that what has been done by law can be revoked; and it is wrong to attempt it." Then the third man of law, Crito, says: "I am of the opinion, that we must deliberate further; it is a matter of importance." These few lines of Terence seem, almost without question, to have been the scenario upon which Molière, or Molière and his friends, constructed the two most effective scenes of *L'Amour Médecin*.¹ M. Tomès and M. des Fonandrès each begin by insisting that the other speak first and then offer diagnoses and remedies which are diametrically opposed. The comic element is heightened by the greater rapidity of the dialogue and more violence in the discussion, which, after nearly resulting in physical violence,

¹ My attention was first called to this point by my colleague, Professor J. B. Pike.

ends by their abandoning the consultation.¹ Tomès believes that the patient's illness is due to "une grande chaleur de sang." That may or may not have any relation to the diagnosis given by Vallot in the Mazarin consultation, in which he said, according to Gui Patin, "que c'est le poumon et qu'il y a de l'eau dans la poitrine." The bleeding which he prescribes was, as we have established above, quite characteristic of his method. Des Fonandrès opines that the patient's malady "est une pourriture d'humeurs, causée par une trop grande réplétion." And that is quite in harmony with the solicitude shown by des Fougerais in his examinations of the stools of the cardinal. The remedy that he prescribes, antimony ("vin émétique"), is also in conformity with his usual practice.

The following scene (the fifth) is much more important from the standpoint of this study. The line and a half of Terence is expanded in this scene into three pages. The character of Cratinus becomes Macroton and Bahys. This addition of a character to the three contained in the scenario taken from the Latin play is significant. There was no reason in the nature of the case why another character should have been added and the fact that it is done is a strong presumption in favor of the view that the Mazarin consultation did exert a very direct influence upon the composition of *L'Amour Médecin*. And another argument may be found in the material which is used for filling out this scene. Gui Patin, in a letter written a few weeks before the consultation in question, but relating to the same illness, gives the following account of an earlier conference held by some of these same doctors. It will be noted that Guénaut fills the leading rôle as in the play:

Enfin le mal du cardinal Mazarin est augmenté. . . . On a assemblé plusieurs médecins, quelques consultations ont été faites; il a été saigné du pied et purgé de deux verres de tisane laxative, nec quidquam melius habet. On parle de le repurger, et peu après ils aviseront de lui faire prendre du lait d'ânesse, ou des eaux minérales; *n'est-ce pas afin qu'il ne meure point sans avoir tous les sacrements de cette nouvelle médecine*, quae semper aliquid molitur, miscet, turbat, novat, etc. Guénaut (Macroton) qui est grand maître en ce métier, dit qu'il ne faut pas demeurer en chemin; *quand on ne peut plus sur un pied, qu'il faut danser sur l'autre*, et que *aegri sunt decipiendi varietate, novitate et multiplicitate remediorum* [II, 456].

¹ The similarity between this ending of the scene and an incident which took place during a certain illness of the king has been discussed (Molière, *Œuvres*, V, 327).

The passage, which leads from what is contained in this letter to the conclusion of the dialogue, or rather the two-part monologue, of Macroton (Guénaut) and Bahys (Brayer): seems very short indeed.

Macroton: Si bien donc que pour tirer, détacher, arracher, expulser, évacuer les dites humeurs, il faudra une purgation vigoureuse. Mais au préalable je trouve à propos, et il n'y a pas d'inconvénient, d'user de petits remèdes anodins, c'est-à-dire de petits lavements, rémollients et détersifs, de julets et de sirops rafraîchissants qu'on mêlera dans sa ptisanne.

Bahys: Après, nous en viendrons à la purgation, et à la saignée, que nous réitérerons, s'il en est besoin.

Macroton: Ce n'est pas qu'avec tout cela votre fille ne puisse mourir, mais, au moins vous aurez fait quelque chose, et vous aurez la consolation qu'elle sera morte dans les formes.

Bahys: Il vaut mieux mourir selon les règles, que de réchapper contre les règles.

The final illness of a man so powerful in the state as Mazarin and at the same time so distrusted and so feared could not fail to interest keenly the people of the time and place. It was, in fact, for several months a topic of general conversation and speculation. No subject, not even the pedantry of a Chapelain, offered such seductive opportunities for the production of an *insolente facétie* to a convivial group of seventeenth-century men of letters as the serio-comic incidents connected with the passing of the *éminentissime* under whose power the state and the court chafed. It is inconceivable that Molière should have failed to grasp its possibilities and that he should not have been tempted to appropriate this comic material (his *bien*) which offered itself so conspicuously. That he, alone or aided by his friends, in accordance with his practice in other plays, should have done this while the impression was fresh is a natural supposition. That this was done, and that the little sketch which was thus put together was preserved, and four years later incorporated in the *divertissement* which he was called upon to prepare in the space of five days, is a conclusion which, in view of the structure of the play, of the points of resemblance and the well-attested practice of Molière, seems wholly reasonable.

The close of the second act of *L'Amour Médecin* is hurried and artificial. Sganarelle, unable to make anything out of the discussion of the doctors, decides, in a monologue of four and a half lines, to

go in search of a seller of orviétan. This personage then appears and sings some verses in praise of his drug. He does not appear again in the play, and the whole is evidently a rather lame device to end the act with a little music and a *pas de ballet*.

In the third and last act, one would naturally expect to see the lover appear at once as a beginning of the dénouement. Instead of that, there are two short scenes; the second is short and transitional, while the first represents Macroton, Tomès, and Filerin in a dialogue which has no essential connection with the rest of the play. Filerin is here the chief character, and he delivers a long harangue composed largely of material taken from Montaigne, in which he adjures his colleagues not to risk their standing and their chances of making large profits by quarreling among themselves. He closes with this thoroughly Machiavellian exhortation: "N'allons pas détruire sottement les heureuses préventions d'une erreur qui donne du pain à tant de personnes, et de l'argent de ceux que nous mettons en terre, nous fait élever de tous côtés de beaux héritages."¹

Filerin was identified by Brossette with Yvelin, "premier médecin de Madame." This is his note: "Acte III, scène I^{re} M. Fillerin. C'est M. Yvelin, un des médecins de la cour, duquel il est parlé en plusieurs lettres de Patin. Le nom. . . ." The note ends there. It is evident that he did not have before him the Greek of Boileau. Cizeron Rival, who enlarges upon the derivation of the other four names, has nothing to say concerning the origin of Filerin. Later commentators of Molière have derived it from Greek words meaning "lover of disputes," which does not accord at all with the rôle played by the personage. Others have suggested a combination of Greek words meaning "lover of death" all of which indicate that this name is not in the same category as the other four, which are perfectly clear and appropriate. And that fact bears out our contention that the scene does not belong to the play as it was originally conceived. It also supports, indirectly at least, our conjecture that the scenes of the consultation of the four doctors were not composed at the same time as the rest of the play.

¹ Raynaud objected: "Ici on voit un peu trop que c'est Molière qui parle, plutôt que M. Filerin" (p. 86). However, if we may believe Gui Patin, one of the chief objects of this satire of Molière was in the habit of saying just such things: "Guénaut (Macroton) a dit quatre mille fois en sa vie qu'on ne sauroit attraper l'écu blanc des malades, si on ne les trompe" (III, 541). Dated June, 1665; *L'Amour médecin* is dated September, 1665.

I have been unable to discover anything in the material at my disposal which would qualify Yvelin for the doubtful honor of having been the prototype of Filerin. He plays a very small rôle in the correspondence of Gui Patin. Now if Yvelin actually corresponded in any way to the medical crook represented by Molière, it is well nigh inconceivable that he should have escaped the bitter invectives, which Gui Patin directed with especial vigor against this very class of alleged evil-doers in the medical profession. Raynaud makes a half-hearted attempt to have Filerin stand for the medical faculty of Paris. Soulié¹ having found in contemporary documents a "maître d'armes" named André Fillerin, put forth the hypothesis that Molière designated one of his doctors by this name; it was the profession of a "maître d'armes de tuer un homme par raison démonstrative." The editors of Molière are evidently right in rejecting this explanation as being too ingenious; but the fact of its being made shows the difficulty of accepting the traditional identification. It may be, however, that Filerin does not designate a doctor. It is notable that he uses no medical terms. His harangue is intended solely to induce the other doctors to come to an agreement in order the better to deceive and defraud their clients. Finally, Filerin by the rôle he plays, and the language he uses as he leaves the stage—"une autre fois montrez plus de prudence"—seems to exercise a certain amount of authority over the other doctors; and yet Tomès (Vallot) was "le premier médecin du Roi," while Yvelin was only the "premier médecin de Madame." The correctness of the traditional identification of Yvelin with Filerin becomes still more doubtful in view of these considerations.

The scene in which Filerin appears is wholly unnecessary to the action of the play and has, in fact, often been omitted in later representations.² Evidently it was not included in the original scheme of the play, for there is no mention of Filerin in the first and principal consultation. Moreover, Lizette, the servant, in the first sentence of the second act, expressly says that only four doctors were called, or at least were coming to the consultation, at the call of her master. The scene is then an interpolation.

¹ *Recherches sur Molière* (Paris, 1863), p. 276, n. 1.

² See editor's note, *Œuvres*, V, 340.

Now *L'Amour Médecin* was produced at the king's request, as Molière himself informs us, and was played before the royal family at Versailles three times between September 13 and 17, 1665.¹ The poet's words suggest clearly a certain amount of interest, amounting almost to a participation in the production of the play on the part of the king. "Ce n'est ici qu'un simple crayon dont le Roi a voulu se faire un divertissement. Il est le plus précipité de tous ceux que Sa Majesté m'ait commandés; et lorsque je dirai qu'il a été proposé, fait, appris et représenté en cinq jours, je ne dirai que ce qui est vrai." These words attest the interest of the king in the little play. It is in connection with it that he is reported to have remarked: "Les médecins font assez pleurer pour qu'ils fassent rire quelquefois." Le Bret in his edition of Molière ([1773], III, 328) goes farther: "Seroit-ce abuser de la conjecture, d'imaginer que notre auteur . . . avoit reçu de ce maître même le conseil de peindre ces nouveaux caractères, comme il en avoit reçu jadis, chez M. Fouquet celui de peindre le chasseur des *Fâcheux*?" The conjecture does not indeed lack plausibility and the parallel is exact. Having seen *Les Fâcheux*, which had also been *commandé* for his diversion, the king "dit à Molière, en lui montrant M. de Soyecourt: 'Voilà un grand original que tu n'as pas encore copié.' C'en fut assez de dit, et cette scène où Molière l'introduit sous la figure d'un chasseur fut faite et apprise par les comédiens en moins de vingt-quatre heures, et le Roi eut le plaisir de la voir en sa place à la représentation suivante de cette pièce.'" ² Molière substantiates this statement in his letter "Au Roi," which prefaces the first edition of *Les Fâcheux*: "Il faut avouer, Sire, que je n'ai jamais rien fait avec tant de facilité, que cet endroit où Votre Majesté me commanda de travailler." We have then in the case of *L'Amour Médecin* conditions exactly similar to those which obtained in the case of *Les Fâcheux*: both, *divertissements* especially ordered for the entertainment of the king and in both of them an interpolated character. In the one case the intervention of the king is attested, in both cases it is known that he was specially interested in the poet's work. The supposition that Filerin

¹ *Registre de La Grange*.

² *Menagiana* (1694), II, 13; cited in Molière, *Œuvres*, III, 11.

owes his place in Molière's play to a suggestion of the king is something more than a mere conjecture.

Now the consultation of the second act should have recalled to his majesty an experience of his own which took place in 1658, the humor of which he was probably able to appreciate by 1665. This is Gui Patin's account of the event:

Le Roi ayant à être purgé, on lui prépara trois doses d'apozèmes purgatifs, qui étoient chacun de cinq onces d'eau de casse, et l'infusion de deux dragmes de séné. *Le Cardinal demanda si l'on n'y mettoit rien d'extraordinaire.* Esprit, médecin de M. le duc d'Anjou, dit que l'on y pouvoit ajouter quelque once de vin émétique. . . . Guénaut dit qu'il n'y en falloit donc guère mettre: Yvelin proposa deux dragmes de citro, alléguant qu'elles n'avoient pas tant de chaleur que le vin émétique. Guénaut répondit que la chaleur du vin émétique n'étoit point à craindre, vu que l'on en mettoit peu; *là-dessus Mazarin dit qu'il falloit donc prendre du vin émétique*, dont on mit une once dans les trois prises, le roi en prit une, sauf à lui donner les autres quand il seroit temps, au bout de deux heures le remède passa, et le roi fut ce jour-là à la selle vingt-deux fois, dont il fut fort las.¹

The italicized passages suggest the important part played by Mazarin in this consultation. This appears still more clearly in Mazarin's own account of the same event, which is contained in a letter, addressed "aux Plénipotentiaires," and dated July 15, 1658:

Je vous diray donc que j'avois grande apprehension que, comme autrefois, *turba medicorum perdidit imperatorem*, il n'arrivast de mesme en cette rencontre, y en ayant six, *dont il n'y avoit pas grande apparence que les sentiments pussent estre fort conformes à cause du peu d'amitié qu'il y a entre quelques (uns) d'eux; mais j'employay si heureusement l'autorité et l'adresse qu'allant au-devant pour empescher leurs contestations, ils n'ont jamais pris aucune resolution sur le moindre remède que le Roy ayt pris, qu'ils n'ayent tousjours esté tous du mesme advis;* et tous unanimement ont dict et escrit qu'ils devoient beaucoup au courage que je leur avois donné, ne leur ayant jamais protesté autre chose que de traiter le Roy comme un simple gentilhomme, sans hesiter à se servir de l'antimoine, et des remèdes plus forts, s'il y avoit raison de le faire.²

¹ *Lettres*, III, 88 f. Mazarin, in his account, speaks of "fourteen or fifteen" visits to the stool and two vomitings. *Lettres* (Avenel ed.; Paris, 1894), VIII, 498.

² *Lettres*, VIII, 513. It must have been a memorable experience for the king. Here is a passage from another letter of Mazarin relating to the same event: Elle (Sa Majesté) . . . apres avoir tremblé jusqu'à bout (*sic*) pour ne prendre une médecine qu'on luy a présentée, comme Elle est accoustumée de faire en santé, luy ayant esté dict qu'il y alloit de sa vie, (Elle) a pris sa resolution et l'a avalée en trois ou quatre reprises et Elle a commandé aux medecins que, s'il falloit prendre d'autres, et qu'Elle refusast de le faire, ils le laissent, s'il estoit necessaire, et la luy fissent prendre de force (*ibid.*, pp. 503 f.).

It is evident from this letter and especially the italicized passage that Mazarin on this occasion performed a part very similar to that played in *L'Amour Médecin* by Filerin, whose whole purpose, as far as the action of the play was concerned, is summed up in his injunction to the recalcitrant doctors: "Allons donc, Messieurs, mettez bas toute rancune, et faisons ici votre accommodement."

The two following examples are characteristic of the harangue which Molière puts in the mouth of Filerin: "Je n'en parle pas pour mon intérêt; car, Dieu merci, j'ai déjà établi mes petites affaires. . . . Les flatteurs, par exemple, cherchent à profiter de l'amour que les hommes ont pour les louanges, en leur donnant tout le vain encens qu'ils souhaitent; et c'est un art où l'on fait, *comme on voit*, des fortunes considérables." Now although this Machiavellian cynicism did not enter into Mazarin's conduct during the king's illness, it reflects what the general public thought of him. The Mazarinades are full of references to the Machiavellian policies of the cardinal; one of them offers a long list of his creatures at the court.¹ Saint-Simon reiterates the same charges with characteristic violence: "C'est à Mazarin que les dignités et la noblesse du royaume doit . . . la règne des gens de rien. . . . Tel fut l'ouvrage du détestable Mazarin, dont la ruse et la perfidie fut la vertu, et la frayeur la prudence."² And Chéruel,³ while justifying largely the administration of the cardinal, admits: "L'astuce de Mazarin, son goût d'espionnage, ses habitudes mercantiles, son avarice provoquaient la haine et la raillerie. L'avarice surtout flétrit ses dernières années."

Nor was this suspected and dreaded activity of Mazarin confined merely to the political side of court life; it extended also to its more personal and intimate side, for Gui Patin, in spite of his exaggerated acerbity, must reflect something of contemporary opinion when he writes to Falconnet: "La reine-mère a été saignée, le cardinal Mazarin a été purgé et commence d'user des eaux de Saint-Myon; etc. . . . voilà comment traitent ici leurs malades ceux qui disent qu'il faut attraper leur argent, *varietate, novitate, multiplicitate remediorum*."

¹ *Choix de Mazarinades* (Paris, 1853), I, 113 ff. And: "Depuis que Sa Majesté l'a appelé au Ministère, a-t-on vu autre chose que . . . bouffons et que traitres dans la maison du Roy" (*ibid.*, p. 156).

² *Mémoires du Duc de Saint-Simon* (Paris, 1889), XIX, 37.

³ In his *Histoire de France sous le ministère de Mazarin* (Paris, 1882), III, 408.

Mazarin a emplî la cour de charlatans. . . . Les grands sont malheureux en médecins; ils n'ont que fourbes de cour, des charlatans et des flatteurs étoffés d'ignorance."¹

It must be admitted, of course, that we have been a long time in hitting upon this similarity between Filerin and Mazarin. If it really existed how did it escape the notice of contemporaries? All that can be said is that the play was a relatively unimportant one, which attracted little attention; that the cardinal had been dead four years, and the four years which were the beginning of a brilliant and absorbing reign; that in any case the theater-going public could hardly have known very much of Mazarin's relations with the court doctors, and that these activities were quite negligible in comparison with the more spectacular and public manifestations of his power.

The writer of this article will be very well satisfied if the part of his work relating to Mazarin is accepted as at least an interesting coincidence.

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¹ *Lettres*, III, 284. Compare the Latin words cited by Gui Patin with those contained in the letter of Mazarin cited above.

As for the name: Filerin might stand for Mazarin as well as for Yvelin. Since no satisfactory explanation of the name has been offered, I would suggest that it is a combination of the final syllable of the name with *filou* ("cheat"). There is a somewhat similar play on words in *La Mazarinade*, "the most celebrated of the pamphlets directed against Mazarin." There one reads:

Va, va t'en, gredin de Calabre,
Filocabron, ou Filocabre.

[*Choix de Mazarinades*, II, 244.]